

THE
OBSERVATION
OF THE
CHRISTIAN SABBATH
RECOMMENDED,
(In a SERMON)

As PARTICULARLY NECESSARY to the WELL-BEING of
CIVIL SOCIETY.

ADDRESSED TO ALL
LOVERS OF THEIR COUNTRY,
AND ESPECIALLY TO
THE HIGHER DEGREES in LIFE.

By a MINISTER of the Established Church.

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P R E F A C E.

AMONGST the many good Tracts and Sermons on the Subject before us, some having been written so long, that they are thrown aside as obsolete by those who are always gaping after something novel, however inferior it may be in Value; and others, from their Length, being perhaps refused a Reading by many that otherwise would have read them; it may not (such being the Case) be quite useless to give a few short, and somewhat fresh, or at least somewhat varied, Hints now and then, to rouse People's Attention to a Duty, which, though absolutely necessary to the Keeping up of Religion and it's very Appearance among us, and consequently essential to our Country's Welfare, is; alas! more and more disregarded by many of the higher and better informed, as well as by Numbers of the lower and more ignorant Classes of Life. Though the Breach of some

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other

other of the Divine Commands may be more strikingly atrocious than is the Breach of the Sabbath, yet perhaps the Breach of no one Command introduces to a greater Train of ill Consequences, nor opens a wider Door, by Degrees, to a greater Variety of Mischiefs, than does the Violation of that Command, which is the Subject of the following Discourse. The Adulterer is too infernal a Thief; the Robber and Murderer are too diabolically black, and too much exposed to present Danger, for any very great Numbers, without much Hesitation and long Progress in Vice, to follow. None that are not sunk down to the Degree of Brutes, (I had almost said to that of Devils) but will have the utmost Abhorrence of their enormous Crimes. But the Sabbath-Breakers, many of them, having possibly something specious (in some Respects) in their Composition, being perhaps jovial, convivial Companions, draw in many of the Unwary to fall in with their Practices. The Devil, when appearing as an Angel of Light, allures with his usurped Beauty many an unguarded Victim, who would start back
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with Horror at the clear Exposure of his cloven Feet, and his genuine Blackness unveiled. The many are not sufficiently wakeful to the Danger of doing what they see so much adopted, and what they think they have Sanctions in Abundance for from Numbers of their Equals, and also (which is most to be lamented) from not a few of their Superiors in Life. Thus making free with the Sabbath is considered as a very venial Sin at the worst, and the Divine Injunction for it's Observance but a Precept relating only to the Jews. It's certain sad Consequences, in the End, to the Community are therefore, if at all, but cursorily thought of, so make little or no Impression, and therefore are, as may be expected, by no Means duly attended to.

But I would ask, what do the Members of our Church in particular mean by adopting the fourth Commandment into our Liturgy, and begging of GOD with serious Faces (as if they were in Earnest) to incline their Hearts to keep it, when it seems in Fact, from their continued Practice, that Numbers
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of them have no Intention at all to do so, in scarcely any one of the Particulars required in it. If this is not impudently trifling with, if it is not playing an arrant Falsehood with, the Majesty of Heaven, What, I beseech you, can be called so?

——— “ *Addis Mendacia Culpæ?* ”

Quid? Speras “ Verbis fallere posse Deum? ”

OVID.

What? Do you add to other Crimes a Lie,
And by fair Words to cheat Omniscience try?

It is truly melancholy, to see into how low an Estimation with every Rank of People the Sabbath is sunk amongst us. There is scarcely a petty Tradesman but must now set out on his Journey on a Sunday. When he gets a few Miles from Home, I suppose the important Gentleman thinks his Travelling on the genteel Day will give him an Air of Consequence, and so produce him proportionable Respect on the Road. He is above the Commandments; and he that is above the Commandments, certainly demands Homage. The common Carriers go with their Waggons, unpunished,
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under the very Noses of the Magistrates themselves. And the Proprietors of Stage-Coaches, who heretofore used to advertise the Running of their Coaches with an "If God permit" on the ordinary Days of the Week, and always with a "Sunday excepted;" these People, I say, have (some of them) now the uncommon Impudence to call upon you plainly in the public Papers to observe, that they run their Stages on Sunday truly just as on other Days, in Contempt of GOD's Command, and in Insolence to a Country that makes Laws to enforce (and would to GOD! it would enforce more effectual) Obedience to it. These lower Classes unfortunately see Numbers of our higher People paying no Regard to the Divine Laws, nor even to the Laws they themselves make, in many Instances. They see them scampering about, using their Servants and Cattle on the LORD's Day wantonly for their Pleasure, and quite contrary to the Divine Command; and why not we for our Gain, say they, if we please? O ye unwise, who rank above the People; O when, when will ye understand? Ye have been establishing
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and countenancing Sunday-Schools, for sowing the Seeds of Religion in the rising Generation. Oh, nip them not in the Bud by the Blast of a baneful Example. Do not any longer give your lower Brethren your Sanction for that Disregard of the Sabbath which so much obtains amongst them, and to which (without your Sanction) by the Frailty of Nature, they are too prone to fall into. Whilst you are constantly taking up their whole Sunday's Attention with your temporal Concerns, your needless Travelling about the Country, and your various Alienations from the great Businesses of the Day; whilst you are thus continually hindering them from bearing their Duties enforced, and by your own Examples impressing the No-Necessity of these Duties, believe me (if nothing else will weigh with you) believe me, you are strongly acting against those temporal Interests you so much wish to serve, even by smothering every Notion in their Minds of doing you any Services for Conscience' Sake. In short, the Sabbath is to be observed, or it is not. If it is of no Use, a superstitious Observance, or a Trick

Trick of Priests to get Pence, let it by all Means be abolished, and People's Liberty (the Liberty of doing what they will) no longer infringed on. But if it is of Divine Appointment, let it be observed as such; and whilst we stamp GOD on our Face, let us "give unto GOD the Things that are GOD's," in Reality.

But after all, it may be asked what Hopes can be entertained that this lesser Argument for the Enforcement of the Sabbath, principally urged in the following Discourse, viz. it's Utility to Civil Society, can be likely to avail, when even the strongest Reasons, the positive Divine Command concerning it, and its being so excellent a Preparative for eternal Rest in Heaven, are, with the Generality, not forcible enough to secure it's Observation. The strongest Arguments, it's granted, ought naturally to operate with the greatest Weight and Effect. These have been urged, well urged, by many good Writers, but to what little Purpose with Multitudes every serious Person is sorrowfully sensible.

Men of the World are led only by the Objects of Sense, actuated only by their present temporal Conveniency; too little struck with the most momentous Things at a Distance, Infidels to "the Evidence of Things not seen." Such People as these may possibly be induced to take up the Observation of the Sabbath, and wish the Enforcement of it, if they are once convinced how useful it is for the Security of their Properties, though they should at present have no true Zeal for GOD or His Command, nor the least Desire to have their own Feet confined to a Path, though it be a principal Path in their Journey to Heaven. And when they have adopted a Notion upon a less worthy, they may possibly cherish it upon a more worthy, Principle. The Beginning in the Flesh may by and by end in the Spirit, Being first a Profelyte of the Gate was a natural Introduction to a Profelyteship of the Covenant. The being first under the Schoolmastership of the Law, no doubt, softened the Hearts of some of the People of Israel, which it's not improbable would otherwise have been more callously hard to the Calls
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of the Gospel. An Attention to the Sabbath once gained, upon whatever may be the Principle, may end in the highest Veneration for it, upon Motives that at first might probably never have been thought of. We wish therefore to try all Means to catch Men to this their Duty. And if we can by any Means catch them, we apprehend there will be no inconsiderable Service done to them individually, to Religion in general, and to Civil Society in particular. Under these Motives this Sermon is sent out. And may the Importance of its Aim be admitted, as some Apology for the Matter and Manner of

The AUTHOR.

JUNE, 1789.

LEVITICUS, xix. 30.

Ye shall keep my Sabbaths, and reverence my Sanctuary: I am the LORD.

 **A**MONG the Ceremonials of the Jewish Law, which were peculiar to them, and with which we have no Concern, are interspersed and repeatedly enjoined, many Precepts also, which are of a moral Nature, and consequently of universal Obligation: Precepts, which, from their Reasonableness, our Judgments must necessarily subscribe to; from their Usefulness, our Interests must press our Compliance with; from our great Master's Countenance and Adoption of them, our Duty must engage us implicitly to obey. Of this Sort I presume are the Injunctions of the Text, with Relation to the Keeping of the Sabbath, and Reverencing of the Sanctuary of God. "Ye shall keep my Sabbaths, and reverence my Sanctuary: I am the LORD:" The LORD, who gave you Life, and all your Time for discharging its various Duties, and therefore have surely a Right of demanding what Proportion of it I please: The LORD, who will not give my Glory
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to another, and therefore command you to reverence such Places particularly, as are more immediately consecrated to, and set apart for, my Worship and Service.

I shall take Occasion from the Words before us, to shew

1st. The Design of instituting the Sabbath, and that we Christians are obliged to observe a Sabbath as well as the Jews, although not on the same Day, nor quite in the same Manner ;

2dly. Shall point out how we are to answer the End of the Institution, even by abstaining from our usual Cares, and by employing ourselves particularly in religious Duties, of which the Reverence of the Sanctuary is one of the Principal required ; and

Lastly, Shall consider of how great Consequence the due Observance of these Duties is to the Well-Being of all Civil Society.

And 1st. Of the Design of instituting the Sabbath, and that we Christians are obliged to observe it.

We find in the Beginning of the Book of Genesis, that God instituted a Sabbath,
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or a Day of Rest, in the very Infancy of the World, as soon as He had finished His grand Work of Creation. God blessed the seventh Day and sanctified it, says Moses, because that in it He had rested from all His Work which he had created and made: i. e. We may justly gather, He consecrated and distinguished one Day from the other six Days by an holy Appointment, doubtless that that Part of His Work, created in His own Image, and endowed with Reason, having a more particularly appropriated Time for the Purpose, might be led the more forcibly to contemplate the Wonders of the Creation, and so yield the due Praise to the High Creator. Thus was the Sabbath instituted in Memory of the Creation. And this also was the Reason given for the Observation of it afterwards at the Delivery of the Law on Mount Sinai. "Remember the Sabbath-Day to keep it holy," and so on—"for in six Days the LORD made Heaven and Earth, the Sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh Day, wherefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath-Day, and hallowed it." Exod. xx. 8, and 11. Indeed we find this Reason afterwards omitted, and another made Mention of, as in Deut. v. 15. "Remember that thou wast a Servant in the Land of Egypt,

Egypt, and that the LORD thy God brought thee out thence, through a mighty Hand, and by a stretched-out Arm; therefore the LORD thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath-Day." It is plain from hence that the Jews were not only to remember the Sabbath, as Men, in Memory of the Creation; but also, as Jews, in Remembrance of their Redemption from Egypt, where its more than probable that in their rigorous Slavery they had no Day of Rest from the intolerable Tasks imposed on them.—Now with Regard to the Obligation of the Command upon us, we are certainly obliged to observe a Sabbath as well as the Jews, though not on the same Day, nor quite in the same Manner. God created us as well as them, and therefore on Account of the Act of Creation, is equally intitled to the same Proportion of *our*, as of *their*, Homage and Worship. But God claimed this Homage and Worship from the Jews for another Reason besides, even because He had delivered them (as before mentioned) from their Bondage in Egypt; and that Deliverance having (as the Learned suppose) taken Place on the seventh Day, they observed that Day for their Sabbath henceforth, most chiefly upon that Account. Now that Deliverance being

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a Type of our infinitely greater Deliverance by JESUS CHRIST, of our Redemption from the spiritual Bondage of Sin and its consequent Ruin, makes it no obscure Intimation that, when this our Redemption should be accomplished by Him, our Sabbath should be kept in Memory of that, even upon that Day of its Accomplishment, when He signally triumphed over all our Enemies by His Resurrection from the Dead. Further, not only by His rising from the Dead upon it, but by His appearing afterwards to His Disciples upon it, and especially by sending down the HOLY GHOST upon it, OUR BLESSED LORD gave, though not a verbal, yet a most particularly striking Sanctification of the Day. So, its plain, thought the Apostles themselves, and therefore they had henceforth their holy Exercises upon this Day especially; and so have thought the whole Catholic Church also, and have consequently ever since taken this Day for their Sabbath and kept it holy.* For these Reasons we Christians observe this Day, the first Day of the Week, the LORD's Day (as the Scripture calls it) or Sunday for our Sabbath, instead of the Day observed by the Jews, which the Apostle speaks of in his Epistle to the Colossians, as ceasing together

III . * See Bishop Beveridge on Church Catechism.

together with many other Peculiarities of the Jewish Law.

- But further; as there is plainly no Obligation on us to observe our Sabbath on the same Day with the Jews, but a very good Reason why we should not, so neither are we obliged to their manner of keeping it. They were bound to keep it (as you see in Exodus) in the most rigid Manner imaginable. But OUR SAVIOUR, the Lord of the Sabbath, hath relaxed this Strictness, by allowing Works of real Necessity, and Works of Mercy and Charity on the Day, which the Severity of the Jewish Law would not admit of. When the Pharisees charged the Disciples with Profanation of the Day for plucking the Ears of Corn upon it, OUR SAVIOUR tells them that the Sabbath was made for Man, was made for his Good and Comfort, and by no Means violated by a Work of such Necessity as was the satisfying of the Cravings of Hunger. And when they cavilled at our LORD's healing the Sick on the Sabbath, He confutes them from their own Conduct in Cases of less Consequence, and declares that it is lawful to *do well* on the Sabbath-Days. But here we ought to observe, that though our SAVIOUR has given some exempted Cases,
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in which the Sabbatic Rest may be broken into without any Profanation, (inasmuch as He esteems the doing good to Man, which is Part of the moral eternal Law, more than the Performance of those positive Laws which respect His own Service; or in other Words, inasmuch as He prefers Mercy before Sacrifice) yet He gives not the least Hint in general in Favour of abolishing or violating the Sabbath, but leaves the Institution to its original Design. He tells us in one of His Evangelists that He came not to destroy, but to fulfil, to heighten the Law (meaning the moral Part of it) to a greater Perfection. And another Evangelist observes that, *as His Custom was*, our SAVIOUR went himself into the Synagogue on the Sabbath-Day, and stood up to read. Thus His own Example we find by St. Luke inforces the Injunction of the Text, and plainly implies that He deems it the Duty of His Followers to observe the Sabbath, and to reverence the Sanctuary.—Thus much for the Institution of the Sabbath, and of our Obligations to observe it. I go on in the

ed Place to shew how we are to answer the End of the Institution;—even by abstaining from our usual Cares, and employing

ploying ourselves in religious spiritual Duties, of which the Reverence of the Sanctuary is one of the principal required.

The Word Sabbath determines that it is designed as a Season of Rest. And a Season it is, in which the Ease of the Body, and the Relaxation of the Mind is graciously consulted; that the one may have some Relief from its wonted Labours, and the other for a-while get rid of those Anxieties, which, whilst connected with the Body, it must in general have a great Share of, and may be employed on Objects more agreeable to, and more worthy of, its Nature. But How will these gracious Designs be answered; How will they not be frustrated, if the Man is engaged, as usual, in his restless Pursuits; if (to give an Instance or two) the Tradesman is plodding for his Gain, or the Traveller pursuing his Journey with the same Sollicitude as at other Times? Surely these can with no Propriety be said to *rest* on the Day; surely therefore they transgress the Duty of it. They toil as much in *their* Way, as the Labourer could do at his daily Work? Where then is their Reverence for the Command of God?—Well—But, says the Man of Business, whilst pursuing his Gain, “ My Family must

must be maintained, my Work is a Work
 of Necessity, and Works of Necessity you
 allow to be lawful, be the Time in which
 they are done ever so sacred." Granted.
 But is your Work then a Work of real
 Necessity, that cannot without material
 Injury be put off till To-morrow? It
 possibly may be so, and Allowances may
 be made. But if your Work is a Work of
 your usual Calling and Business, and you
 frequently execute this Work on the sacred
 Day, fancifully calling it a Work of Ne-
 cessity forsooth, when in Fact it is only a
 Sacrifice to your Convenience or your
 Covetousness, or perhaps to your Idleness
 in not having executed it before, you may
 possibly for a Time impose upon yourself
 who are willing to be deceived; but your
 Slight of the Divine Command is obvious
 to every one else. Every one else sees clearly
 that your real God is Mammon.—But
 what Excuse for his Violation of the Day
 has the other Sabbath-Breaker I mentioned,
 the Traveller? He does not pretend to make
 any: for let his Business be ever so unneces-
 sary or ever so trifling, let his travelling be
 but mere Matter of Pleasure, or of Humour
 disdaining Controul, (as most of our Sun-
 day-Travelling undoubtedly is) he has in
 these *free* Days the Sanction of Custom
 and

and vile Fashion so much on his Side, that he does not aim at the least Excuse, but breaks the Sabbath himself with the coldest Unconcern, and involves the whole Country on the Road he travels in the Violation of the Command, with the utmost Assurance, and (as it appears) the most unfeeling Unconsciousness of doing any Thing that is wrong.—The poor Cattle are forced into, and scourged down in, the Service. The kind Notice of the Divine Command in their Favour hath no Effect with their profane Masters, in screening them from their cruel and uninterrupted Drudgery. Had they, poor Creatures! as once Balaam's Ass had, the Faculty of Speech, we should (as Times go) doubtless hear Thousands of them "speaking with Man's Voice" every Sunday Evening, and feelingly expostulating with "the Madness" of their Drivers.—Worse still (I cannot help observing by the Way) in their Profanations of the Sabbath are the tipling Husbandman and Mechanic; who, the one stopt in his Agriculture, and the other shut out of his Shop, not uncommonly betake themselves on this Day to the public House of Entertainment, and there squander away dissolutely in a few Hours a great Share of what they have been labouring painfully, by the
Sweat

Sweat of their Brow, the six preceding Days, to acquire. And here it is obvious just to ask, why is not this Shop shut up too, and barricadoed closely against all such wrong-headed, dissolute Company? It is the very worst Shop that can be opened on the Day. It is a Shop that is sure to hurt its Customers very much. It is almost sure to leave their Minds as destitute of all good Morals and of every Virtue, as it is their Pockets emptied, to their Families' Beggary, of all those Pence which should go for their comfortable Maintenance and Support.

In short, Numbers amongst us act, as if they thought the Time allowed for their worldly Concerns and Pleasures so small a Portion, as to justify their making free with some of that *unreasonable* Quantity which God claims for His own. And thus we unfortunately see in various Ways a Defecration of that holy Time, which is in great Mercy appropriated for serving the great Interests of Man, and particularly set apart for keeping alive the solemn Service and public Worship of God.—And indeed I do not see how we can pay due Obedience to the first Clause of the Text, unless we also comply with the second: we cannot

cannot duly keep the Sabbaths, without reverencing the Sanctuary of God.—By the Sanctuary we understand the Tabernacle and Temple among the Jews, and also the Oratories and Synagogues built for the Use of those who were too remote from the former, under the Jewish Dispensation. To these answer our Churches. Our Churches therefore are these Sanctuaries with us. Now the principal Way of reverencing these Sanctuaries is by resorting to them, with clean Hands and pure Hearts, for the Adoration of that Majesty whose Honour they are dedicated to. For as he, who swore by the Temple, was said to swear by Him that dwelt therein; so it is meant of him, who is said to reverence the Sanctuary, that he reverenceth that Being, to whom the Sanctuary is particularly appropriated. Now a Reverence for Him is especially shewn, and His Honour is especially contributed to, by the Prayers and Praises of an united Congregation. By public Worship we openly testify what God we acknowledge, declare to the whole World how we honour Him, and avow ourselves His Servants in the most conspicuous and unequivocal Manner. In it our own great Interests also are most materially consulted: for How are we so likely
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to obtain His Blessings and avert His Judgments, as by joint Applications in the Name of Him, who, when two or three are thus gathered together, hath graciously promised to be in the Midst of them? St. Matt. xviii. 20.—*The Jews, though they had no express Order in the Commandment concerning the religious Services of the Sabbath-Day, yet it's plain, from their settling Oratories and Synagogues, they understood, by it's Sanctification, that such Duties were implied to be performed upon it. The Zeal too of the primitive Christians, in sanctifying the Sabbath by their public Devotions, is abundantly testified by Ecclesiastical History. How much in Contrast (by the Way) this Zeal, both of Jews and Christians, to the Practice of many professed Christians of this Day, who give so seldom or so partial Attendance at the Church of CHRIST, that you can only suppose them when attending but as acting a Part, to save Appearances in some Measure with the World, for their temporal Purposes, but by no Means in earnest in the Christian Cause, nor indeed actuated on at all in Reality by the true Christian Principle?—Further; though the At-

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tendance

* See Barrow on the Decalogue.

tendance at the public Ordinances of the Sanctuary be the principal of the Sabbatic Duties, yet when we are returned from that Attendance, we are by no Means to suppose the Business of the Sabbath at an End. The domestic Devotions, the Reading and Meditating on the Holy Scriptures, the applying what we have heard in public to our own Cases in private, will very properly engage a further Part of our particular Attention. And if we find it necessary for the Relief of the Mind, which will seldom bear a long Application to one Object, to use some Relaxations, we must take Care that they be not only unexceptionable in themselves, but also that they tend remotely (as far as we can judge) to no Evil; that they be not offensive to our graver or weaker Brethren, nor such as those many, who seek Occasion and are glad of any Sanctions for their own Irregularities, can to any bad Purposes avail themselves of. But indeed the Variety of Acts, which we may on this Day be laudably engaged in, will (by being in their Turns applied to) greatly relieve the Mind from any palling Sameness, without being liable to the Exceptions, which may possibly be made by some to other Kinds of Relaxation. The spiritual Concerns of their
Households

Houſholds and Dependants, will, to every conſiderate Maſter of a Family, impoſe a Task that cannot with any Propriety be diſpenſed with. On this Day eſpecially they are to be inſtructed in their religious and moral Duties. We have been inſtrumental in bringing our Children into a moſt dangerous World, and we ſhould ſpare no Pains in endeavouring to fortify them againſt it. Our Servants have given us their Labours the whole Week, and it is but Juſtice that we ſhould ſee them inſtructed in thoſe Things, which will benefit them infinitely more than the Wages they earn, or any worldly Emolument they can receive from us. But if Maſters of Families make free with the Sabbath themſelves, if they ſpend it in unprofitable Idleneſs or vain Levity, as a tireſome Day that hangs heavy on their Hands; and give *no*, or but a *partial* Attendance, perhaps on one Noon only at the Sanctuary, (as it ſeems is the fashionable, pernicious Mode, eſpecially of the higher People of the preſent Day) they give a fair Opening and indeed an Encouragement to their Inferiors, their Servants and Dependents to do ſo too, and thus are answerable not only for their own Profanations, but in a great Measure for thoſe of their whole

Household also.—Nor will these Evils terminate here. The Poison of the Example is diffused abroad, and taints a greater or a lesser Circle, in Proportion to the Size of the Source from whence it springs. Thus Numbers are at length debauched from their Duty, and many unintended Mischiefs accrue in the End to Civil Society;—to the Well-being of which I am engaged in the

Third Place to shew, of how great Consequence the Observance of the Duties of the Text is.—Now without Religion no Civil Society can ever long, or at least happily, subsist. For where will be the Check to restrain Mankind, in many Cases, from the Violation of their social Duties, if you remove the Superintendency of that omnipotent and omniscient Being, who is privy to the most secret Springs of human Action, and is armed with ample Powers for the Correction of the hautiest Sinner? Patriotism or Love of Country are specious Words, and what all, even the most differing Parties, affect the highest Veneration for, and indeed pretend to be all possessed of. But this Love of Country, unless proceeding from, and resolvable into an higher Principle of Love, will, it's too plain,

plain, with all it's lofty Pretensions, operate so feebly in general (especially where Appearances can be saved) that in all our Wishes for the Welfare of the State, there is the greatest Propriety in begging God of His Mercy, to deliver us from the Care of all *irreligious* Patriots. Even Penal Laws (useful and necessary as they are, as the World goes) will not of themselves be a sufficient Mean of securing the Peace and Well-Being of Civil Society, though they remedy in a Degree some of those sad Evils which are continually arising from Want of Principle. For these Laws reach not private Vices, nor extend to the Beginnings of Sin, the Corruption of the Heart. Nay, many of the open Acts of Violence which are continually committed they cannot touch, for Want of sufficient Evidences to bring the Guilt home to the Perpetrators of them.—Well then; nor this Patriotism so much talked of and affected, nor even Penal Laws are sufficient of themselves for the good Subsistence of Civil Society. Something else then must be taken in, in Aid of their Impotence. And this can be nothing but a right Apprehension of that Being who searcheth the Heart, and to whom we are accountable for all our Ways.—This, in one Word, agreeable to what

I have said before, can be nothing but—
Religion.

But Religion cannot long subsist, at least among the Generality of Mankind, without some stated Times for the more solemn Celebration, and some appropriated Places to assemble in for the public Inculcation, of it. What may be done at any Time and at any Place, will be done at no Time and in no Place, is a Maxim, which I fear holds no where truer than in those Matters, which particularly pertain to God. / So corrupt is our Nature in general; so unhappily backward are the Minds of most to Things spiritual and abstracted, that they will not pay the proper Attention to the Duties of Religion, unless by Authority convened to them: Nay, the most enlarged Understandings, and even those who have no little Zeal in these Matters, even *they* have Need frequently of Monitors to their Duties, amongst that infinite Variety of Diversions from them, which they are in this World so constantly meeting with. Such being the Frailty of Mankind, God surely in great Mercy hath made the Sabbath for Man, as the most peculiar Season of teaching and reminding him of his religious, his social, and his personal Duties.

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In great Mercy hath He enjoined a reverential Attendance at His Sanctuary, that the holy Flame might be blown up afresh in the Beginning, and kept alive in the Breast to the End of every Week; and, like the Lamp in the Jewish Tabernacle, might be continued burning alway. For on this Day and in this Place is it chiefly, that religious Truths with their forcible Sanctions are particularly urged, that Morality and social Virtue in all its Branches is particularly enforced, that the Breach of Divine and human Laws is particularly exposed and denounced Judgment against; and in short that Growth in all Goodness is particularly invoked, and is most likely to be obtained too, provided no *habitual* Course of Sinning on the other Days of the Week render (as certainly it may render) the apparently strictest Observance of this one Day but a Farce, and the Treading of God's Courts upon it but a Defilement of His Sanctuary.—Happy then for Society, I am persuaded, it would be; blessed in its Consequences would it most assuredly prove, if God's Sabbaths were solemnly kept, and His Sanctuaries reverently attended, by all, and if the Breaches of the former, and the Absenting from the latter, were to meet with that thorough

thorough Discountenance they so justly merit. Securer would our Property soon become from Invasion and Rapine; safer our Persons and our Lives from Assaults and Violence. As Irreligion and Dissipation would be daily diminishing, *flagitious* Crimes of Consequence would but seldom be heard of, and such Shoals of unprincipled abandoned Wretches, as now sadly abound amongst us, would no longer be obliged to be sacrificed every Year to their injured Country. Breach of the Sabbath, and absenting from Church, (you know) are commonly charged by our dying Convicts with being, above all Things, the grand Source of their profligate Conversation. We are shocked at their consummate Vileness; we shudder at their lamentable Catastrophes. We should do well then to consider, whether our own light Examples, with Regard to the Sabbath, may not have remotely (however unintentionally) contributed, in no small Degree, to lead them into, or at least to confirm them in, their Neglects of those Duties, which their dying Breath pronounceth to have been the first Causes of all their Sorrows.

To conclude.—As we are not to Judaize on the one Hand, so surely we are bound
not

not to Heathenize on the other. As we are not encumbered with the burdensome Ceremonials of the Jewish Laws, so surely we should shew a grateful Sense of the indulgent Exemption, by a more strict Regard to those, which are of universal and eternal Force. Our temporal Welfare, as Individuals, is deeply concerned in the Observance of the Duties before us; the Peace and good Order of Civil Society (which here only exists, and therefore here only can be benefited by us) plead strongly in Behalf of it; and the very Face of Religion (so necessary to our future Happiness) cannot be preserved without it. And though it may be justly objected, that the *Face* or *Form* without the *Power* of Godliness is of no Avail to the Assumer of it, yet we may as justly answer, that as without a Face an human Figure would be very uncomely and incomplete, so where there is no Face or outward Appearance of Religion, there little of it's sterling Worth can reasonably be expected to be found within.

May all then, in their respective Stations, exert themselves in promoting Duties which so many great Benefits attend, and in preventing, as much as possible, that Violation of them, from which so many bad Consequences

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quences unavoidably ensue. Laws have our Superiors made for securing Obedience to these divine Commands. And would they be so *pious* to recommend by Example, what they are so *wise* as to enjoin by Law, they would most essentially promote the Cause we are pleading for, even by transfusing Piety into the lower Classes in the most pleasing Manner, and so drawing after them many a Follower, whom Laws, Human and Divine, with all their Terrors (it's too palpable) act but very feebly upon indeed. Would they but coolly consider what Injury every Sabbath-Breaker is actually (though no doubt undesignedly) doing his country, and that the higher he is in Life, the more Mischief he is doing it, through that Influence his Situation gives him; I am bold to think they would not take themselves, nor suffer their Dependents to take, those unwarrantable Liberties with the Sabbath, which every true Friend to Religion and the Community is grieved at the Heart to see them so thoughtlessly do. And would our *Magistrates and Church-Officers, as *in Duty bound*, be more conscientious in enforcing the Laws against the Violators of the

* See Nehemiah's Expostulation with the Nobles of Judah, in Regard to the Sabbath. xiiith Chapter of Nehemiah.

The Sabbath; would they cause particularly those Nurseries of Vice, our Drinking-Houses, to be more duly inspected, and the profane Herds to be driven out from under their unhallowed Roofs, many a Family would certainly be saved from much Poverty with its Train of Evils, and many a Wretch from an untimely and scandalous Death.

But however, be remiss who will, with Regard to the Sabbath, let us, one and all, be the more zealous and active in a Cause so particularly interesting to Civil Society, and our Country at large. The more the Iniquity of the World abounds, the worse the Example the Higher may set, the more relaxed and lukewarm the many are become in their religious Duties, the more careless others are of the public Weal,—the farther from waxing cold ought *our* Love of God and His Laws, of our Country and its Interests, in all Respects, most certainly to be.

In one Word—Attend. I am the LORD, says the ALMIGHTY Himself. The Lord of you as Men, by my Work of Creation: The Lord of you as Christians, by my Act of Redemption. In both Capacities therefore,

fore, as Men and Christians, you are bound to obey my Commands. But your calling me "Lord, Lord," is no Obedience to me, and will avail you nothing, if ye "do not the Things which I say." Now the Things which I say and give you in Command are many, and amongst these my Commands I have repeatedly enjoined one, which is most likely to secure your Obedience to all the Rest, yea and do still enjoin it for your constant Observance, that

"Ye keep my Sabbaths, and reverence my Sanctuary"—Disobey me at your Peril—
—"I am the Lord."

FINIS.

ERRATA.

Page	Line
8	7 for <i>and to which</i> , read <i>and which</i> .
23	3 for <i>Sanctury</i> , read <i>Sanctuary</i> .
22	14 for <i>uninterrupted</i> , read <i>unremitted</i> .
28	22 for <i>haughtiest</i> , read <i>haughty</i> .
29	last for <i>agreeable</i> , read <i>agreeably</i> .

